Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Governance and Ethics Committee

28 September 2022

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ATTENDANCE AT KEY NATIONAL CONFERENCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek an ongoing approval for relevant Member attendance at a number of key national conferences which the Council routinely attends on an annual basis, as a means of minimising costs.

Information and Advice

2. This Committee's terms of reference include approving councillors' attendance at relevant conferences for which fees are payable.

3. There are a number of key national conferences which have been attended by the County Council consistently in recent years (except for the lockdown period when such events were not held). The following events are recognised as the key forums for Councils to share best practice and to hear from Government Ministers and sector leaders:

   a) Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference and Exhibition
   b) County Councils Network (CCN) Annual Conference
   c) National Children and Adult Services (NCASC) Annual Conference
   d) LGA / Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) Annual Public Health Conference

4. In the past, approvals for attendance have been sought each year for each of these conferences on an individual basis. It should be noted that any increase in costs year on year have tended to be very limited (if occurring at all) and have represented inflationary increases. In the previous committee system, those approvals were sought from the relevant Committee/s, with attendance at the 2022 LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition having been approved by Policy Committee in January 2022. The next CCN Annual Conference and NCASC Conferences are scheduled to take place in November 2022 which has prompted the need for approvals at this stage.

5. Approval of attendance at these conferences now sits within the remit of Governance and Ethics Committee. To streamline the approval process and to ensure that the most cost-effective means of attendance (including early bird prices and optimum accommodation costs) are achieved at the point when booking systems first go live, it is

proposed that a standing approval be given to enable attendance each year by the following relevant Members:

Conference	**Relevant Member Roles**
LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition	Council Leader Council Deputy Leader Leader of the Main Minority Group
CCN Annual Conference	Council Leader Council Deputy Leader Leader of the Main Minority Group
NCASC Annual Conference	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health (ASCPH) Deputy Cabinet Member for ASCPH Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (CYP) Deputy Cabinet Member for CYP
LGA / ADPH Annual Public Health Conference	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health (ASCPH) Deputy Cabinet Member for ASCPH Chairman of Health and Wellbeing Board

6. Each of the above conferences will also be attended by a relevant individual Chief Officer, with the exception of the NCASC Conference which will be attended by a Chief Officer from both ASCPH and CYP departments.

7. Should any of the above conferences in future see a rise in costs above inflationary increases then it is proposed that a further report be brought to this committee to seek a revised approval. Similarly, should the membership of the Council's political groups change in a way that affects the allocation of places at such events then a further report will be brought back to Committee to reflect that.

Other Options Considered

8. To continue to seek approvals on an annual basis for each conference individually, although it is recognised that these are priority events that the Council is always likely to benefit from sending representatives to.

9. To not attend such conferences but that would mean the Council missing out on a valuable opportunity to share best practice and utilise networking opportunities.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. To enable places to be booked at these conferences as early as possible once the relevant booking systems go live, thereby achieving the most cost-effective means of attendance (through early bird conference place prices and optimum accommodation costs).

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. The 2022 prices (excluding VAT) are:

- LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2022 - £545 (£495 early bird price) per delegate (N.B attendance at this conference was previously agreed by Policy Committee in January 2022)
- CCN Annual Conference –£780 per delegate
- NCASC Annual Conference - £495 per delegate
- LGA / ADPH Annual Public Health Conference – £250 per delegate

13. The costs of conference attendance, accommodation and travel for the relevant Members can be met from the budget for Members' Conferences for which there is an allocation of £8,000 in 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That a standing approval be granted for the following conference attendance by Members, together with any necessary travel and accommodation arrangements:

Conference	**Relevant Member Roles**
LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition	Council Leader Council Deputy Leader Leader of the Main Minority Group
CCN Annual Conference	Council Leader Council Deputy Leader Leader of the Main Minority Group
NCASC Annual Conference	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health (ASCPH) Deputy Cabinet Member for ASCPH Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (CYP) Deputy Cabinet Member for CYP
LGA / ADPH Annual Public Health Conference	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health (ASCPH) Deputy Cabinet Member for ASCPH Chairman of Health and Wellbeing Board

2) That an updated approval, where relevant, be sought at any such point when the cost of places at any of the above events increases beyond inflationary increases or the political composition of the Council changes in a way that may affect the allocation of places at these events.

ADRIAN SMITH,
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For any enquiries about this report please contact Keith Ford, Team Manager, Democratic Services, Tel 0115 9772590

Constitutional Comments (HD – 27/07/2022)

14. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of Governance and Ethics Committee

Financial Comments (RWK 05/09/2022)

15. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the report. All of the costs to be incurred will be met from existing revenue budget allocations.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Policy Committee – 13 January 2022 – Attendance at Local Government Association Annual Conference and Exhibition 2022

- Report to Policy Committee – 2 September 2021 – County Councils Network Annual Conference 2021

- Report to Policy Committee – 18 September 2019 **–** Attendance at National Children and Adult Services Conference: November 2019

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All